

**MAINE STATE HARNESS RACING COMMISSION**

**IN RE: BANGOR STATE FAIR                    )    ORDER AND DECISION**  
  )    **ON REOPENING RACE**  
  )                   **DATES**  
  )

**INTRODUCTION**

On March 24, 2026, the Maine State Harness Racing Commission (“Commission”) considered Bangor State Fair’s request to reopen the November 19, 2025 race date assignment proceedings pursuant to 8 M.R.S. § 271(1)-(2), 5 M.R.S. §§ 9051 - 9064, and Chapter 19, Section 4.10 of the Maine State Harness Racing Commission Rules. Bangor State Fair requested to remove a day of racing on August 8, 2026.

A quorum of the Commission was present during all stages of the proceedings. Chair Harry B. Center, II, Barry Norris, Patricia Varnum, Don Marean, and Chandler Woodcock participated in the hearing. The Notice of Hearing was posted on the Commission’s website and emailed to interested parties on March 2, 2026. The Notice of Hearing was admitted into evidence without objection as Exhibit 1.

**FACTUAL FINDINGS**

Shane Bacon, the Commission’s Executive Director, testified that Bangor State Fair requested not to race on August 8, 2026. Bangor State Fair’s May 6, 2025, email request was admitted into evidence without objection as Exhibit 2. Executive Director Bacon explained that Bangor State Fair made the request because it has scheduling conflicts on August 8, 2026. He testified that there is enough racing going on that week that it would not be a concern to remove that day. He did note, however, that the Sire Stakes had planned to race on that day so the Stakes races that day will need to be rescheduled. Executive Director Bacon testified that in 2025,

Bangor State Fair requested two days of racing at the Date Assignment Hearing and later requested not to race one of those days.

No one from Bangor State Fair appeared to testify on behalf of its request. Joy Bonenfant, Resource Administrator for the Commission, testified that requests to remove days of racing can cause administrative burden on Staff, as depending on when the request is made, it can require points for licensees to be redistributed and can affect the payments that the licensees receive for racing days.

### **CONCLUSIONS AND ORDER**

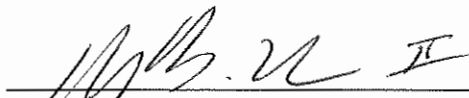
Based on the testimonial and documentary evidence in the record, the Commission concluded it was appropriate to reopen the race date proceedings and voted unanimously to do so. Based upon the evidence and testimony presented and upon deliberation, the Commission concludes that Bangor State Fair demonstrated that it is in the best interest of the harness racing industry for it to not conduct racing on August 8, 2026, as it may not be able to do so safely due to scheduling conflicts. However, the Commission notes that it is not ideal to request a Saturday race date and then ask to relinquish it, as Saturdays generally have good public attendance. Additionally, the Commission recognizes the burden on the Stakes program which must now reorganize its 2026 racing calendar. Although the Commission is permitting Bangor State Fair to relinquish its August 8, 2026, race date, it requests that Bangor State Fair use more care and deliberation when requesting future race dates to avoid situations like this.

### **APPEAL RIGHTS**

Any party to this proceeding may seek review of this Decision, to the extent this review is permitted by law, by filing a petition for review in Superior Court pursuant to 5 M.R.S.

§§ 11001, *et seq.*, within thirty (30) days after receiving this notice of this Decision. Any other person aggrieved by this Decision may seek judicial review in like manner by filing a petition for review in Superior Court within forty (40) days after the date of this Decision.

Dated: 4-21-2020

  
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Harry B. Center II, Chair  
Maine State Harness Racing Commission

cc: 2026 Race licensees and automatic intervenors  
Chad Caldwell, Bangor State Fair  
Shane Bacon, Executive Director  
Miles Greenleaf, Program Coordinator  
Nicole Sawyer, Assistant Attorney General